

| **LONGFORM** |

A Scar is born

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Matthew "Scar" Haugen kneels in the middle of a wrestling ring preparing for battle.

The gangly 20-year-old knots the laces of his dirty navy-blue sneakers and then gathers up several weapons. He grabs a battered kendo stick and throws it into an aluminum trashcan, along with several other tools of destruction, including a Teflon frying pan and a six-foot length of steel chain.

Instead of trunks or a singlet, Scar sports a pair of black Dickies cinched by a studded punk rock belt. A Tee shirt covers an abdomen crisscrossed with the scar tissue that inspired his moniker.

Hunting for other implements of violence, Scar is struck by an idea. "I'm gonna wrap up a steel chair in barbed wire," he says, a devilish grin taking over his gaunt face. The Phoenix resident unravels the spiked fencing material from a 50-pound spool he purchased from a local Home Depot and weaves it around a folding chair.

But a man keeping watch nearby tells Scar to dump the augmented chair. Too risky, Mark Morrone tells him, and Scar scraps the potentially dangerous weapon.

while he exerts himself.

Anticipating that he'll be shot down again, Scar bellows, "I haven't bladed in two fucking years!"

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But his protestations fall on deaf ears. "Don't do that," Morrone says flatly.

"Fuck you!" Scar replies with a sneer.

Morrone is the owner of the fledgling Phoenix-based South Western Wrestling Federation, and Scar is one of his most hyperactive stars. The skinny dynamo is particularly anxious to get some practice today after three months out of action. Two other jobs, college classes and breaking up with a girlfriend had dominated his time away from the ring.

Like others who wrestle in the 18-month-old organization, Scar is a veteran of several local, short-lived grappling ventures. The SWWF and other outfits like it operate somewhere just above the level of untrained teenagers recklessly trying out pro routines in their backyards and far, far below the stars on television doing those kinds of moves for large money.

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Some of the groups promise solid training and occasional money. One claims to help wrestlers gain a real shot at wrestling's big time, the WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment), which operates such television shows as *RAW* and *SmackDown!* But the majority of the Valley's aspiring pro wrestlers grapple in anonymity, risking their health every time they enter the ring.

...meaning to win by the age of seven, he's gone through so much surgery, and today he continues to carry a potential medical time bomb in his abdomen. But his complicated health history has also left him, he admits, with a taste for pain.

"I've done so much stuff that I thought could end my career, but here I am, I'm still fucking here. I don't know anybody who's had the same situation as me, of all my medical conditions and wrestled," he says.

"People think it's fucking nuts . . . but I've found something I love to do."

And others are beginning to take notice of Haugen's sheer masochistic abandon. In a documentary filmed two years ago and scheduled for release on DVD this fall, Scar is called a "backyard legend." Scar's featured on the movie's promotional materials, and he traveled to the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival in April as a guest of the filmmaker to help drum up attention for the project, which is enjoying limited runs in L.A. and New York theaters this summer. Scar is hoping the attention will help him gain even more local fame as an extreme, pro-style wrestler. His mother just hopes he doesn't end up dead.

With Morrone's objections finally out of the way, Scar's "anything goes" three-way match is set to begin.

On one side, he's faced by dapper Doc Fairday, the alter ego of 23-year-old Casey Goslin, who affects the manner of a "refined Southern gentleman." He's so refined, he rarely goes for the kind of stuff Scar revels in. "I won't do the extreme stuff with razor wire, fluorescent light bulbs and mousetraps like Scar [does]," says the 6 foot 1 inch, 233 pound behemoth. A corrections officer at the Black Canyon Juvenile Institution Addition until recently, Goslin says he prefers wrestling to his day job because, "if I get a chair thrown at me in the SWWF, I can throw it back." Clad in a formal three-piece suit and knee-length waistcoat, he tries to give the impression that he's just stepped off a plantation